

A

REVIEW

OF THE

Affairs of *FRANCE*:

Purg'd from the Errors and Partiality of *Newſ-Writers*
and *Petty-Statesmen*, of all Sides.

Saturday, April 15. 1704.

THE method for raising Men In *France* for the Land-Service, was the last Instance, of the Absolute Dominion of the King, and a Proof of its being Adapted, and particularly Useful to the promoting the Greatness of his Power, and his Conquests abroad.

For the Sea, his Methods are equally Absolute, and as positively Obey'd, when first he Resolv'd to make himself Great at Sea; and if Fame belies not our Politick Managers of that day, receiv'd Helps and Instructions from *England* for that Purpose; I mean, for Building Ships of War; the Great Defect, which he found almost Insuperable, and an Obstruction which wou'd have Discouraged any Prince in the World but himself, was his want of Sea-men; and so far was he from being in a Condition to Supply himself by Ordinary Methods, that if I am rightly inform'd, upon a most Exact Scrutiny, in all the Ports of his Kingdom, he found, that if all the Ships belonging to his Subjects were wholly laid up, and Trade laid by, all the Seamen in his Dominions wou'd not Man his Navy; that is, such a Navy as he then had design'd to Build.

Measures were then immediately taken to Increase the Number of Seamen, and

the Building of his Ships went on with the usual Success of all his Undertakings: The first Method for Encrease of Sea-men, was to Compel every Merchant's Ship, Fishing-Boat and other Vessel in his Kingdom, to take on Board, over and above their usual Compliment, so many Men on the King's Account, to whom the King allow'd Certain Wages, and the Merchant or Master, Victuals and Drink. This Project being begun in a Time of Peace, when *France* was full of Men; the Men crowded on Board the Vessels as a Favour, Happy was he could get to be Nam'd; and thus in 7 Years time, the King made above 20000 Sailors; by this time his Ships Encreas'd, and he always kept a Squadron at Sea, let there be Occasion or no; and if he had no Service ready, he often thought fit to make little Sea-Wars, to introduce his Men, to shew them some Action; and raise the Credit of his Sea Affairs: Such was the two or three Bombardments of *Algiers*, and one at *Genoa*, Convoys to *Constantinople*, Insulting *Tunis*, and the like; this was about the Year 1678, when these Additions were made, and his Sea-men from that time began so to Encrease, that in the Year '91, we found them able to Man a Fleet of 80 Sail in the Line of Battle, and

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Challenge

Challenge both *English* and *Dutch*, to an Engagement at our own doors.

The next Article of Absolute Power, is the raising of Money; What may not that Monarch do, who has the Bodies of the Poor, the Purfes of the Rich, and the Hands of his Nobility at his Absolute Command?

We find the Revenues of *France*, tho' vastly Great, not equal to the more vast Designs of this Growing Monarch; we find, that at a Time, when we all thought he had enough to do, to find Money to Defray his prodigious Expences, he yet undertook the Regulation and Support of the Needy Craving Monarchy of *Spain*; but when it comes to the Test, we find also, if it be in the Nation, he will never want it. If half the Stories we have been told, of the Poverty, Ruin, Depopulation, &c. of *France*, were true, how could it be possible the King cou'd raise such immense Summs Yearly, and almost every Year Increasing, as we find he does.

But as 'tis the Method of raising them, not the Quantity rais'd, which I am at present upon, 'tis my Business to tell you, that nothing but the Princes Absolute Demand Regulates both the Summ and the Quota; and this is signified by an Edict, that is, a *Sic Volo*. The Council Resolves, Projectors Propose, and his Majesty Commands, that such and such Summs, must be rais'd by such and such Methods, and the People have nothing to do in the Matter, but to open their Purfes and pay the Money.

Pim and *Hambden* must not here have denied Payment of Ship Money, and stood Tryal with the King, Replevy'd their Goods when seiz'd by the Collectors, and given in Bail to Answer it at Law.

Nor had it been in the Power of Provinces or Counties to have Redress'd themselves; if the Collectors of the Ordinary Revenues, are not sufficient to Levy the Tax, his Majesty has 12 Regiments of Collectors, call'd Dragoons, who are always ready to cause their Master's Orders to be put in Execution the Shortest way.

It is true, That for Forms sake the States of *Languedoc* do meet once a Year, or oftner, if his Majesty please, to Raise Money, and the Clergy in their Course, meet like-

wise upon the King's Request; if I may be free to say what they meet for, 'tis only to make the King a fine Speech; for as to the Business, if they did not raise him the Money, he would raise it without them. The Church-men therefore meet to give his Majesty what they call a Free Gift, but 'tis far from free, because they cannot be free to let it alone if they please; they meet together, but their Case is, the King makes his Demand of Tax, which they have nothing to do to Dispute, their Business is to Obey.

By these Absolute Methods, his Majesty is secured of what Men and Money he pleases, and he that has this Advantage to back a Towering Ambition, what may he not perform?

If any Man ask me what are the Benefits of Absolute Monarchy to the Subject; I know but two, *Poverty* and *Subjection*, and if there are any more, I would be glad to know what they are; For tho' I am of Opinion, as I noted before, That the Lamentable Accounts we have of the Misery, Poverty, and Depopulation of *France*, are not half of them true; yet I nowhere pretend, nor will any-body else affirm, that a Kingdom is not Impoverish'd by a Prince, whose Prodigious Designs threaten the whole Christian World, and whose Greatness is supported singly upon the Treasure of his own Subjects; for we do not find he can have Supplies of Money from any Place but from his own Dominions; without doubt therefore the Country has suffered extremely, and the vast Summs the King has drawn from his Subjects on those Extraordinary Occasions, must have Prodigiously sunk the General Stock of the Kingdom; But still we find they hold out, their Supplies of Money keep running, the Subject bleeds freely, his Armies go on too successfully; and as to the Poverty of his Subjects, it is not the present Subject, I shall come to it in its Course.

This the *French* have always Enjoy'd, as a help to the Payment of their Extravagant Taxes: That in whatsoever Posture his Affairs have been, he has always kept the War out of his own Country, and excepting a little Irruption made by the Duke of *Savoy* about *Ambrun*, in the

the last War, and our Alarms on their Coast : the Subjects of the King of *France* have never seen the Face of an Enemy in their own Country. The King has always taken care to make War against his Neighbours, and to have the Seat of it in the Bowels of their Country, by which Method he has not only Spar'd and Maintain'd the Peace of his own Country, but has Ruin'd, Depopulated and Impoverish'd his Enemies.

The *Emperor*, the *Dutch*, or the *Spaniard* have never been able to do this; they have always had the *French* in their own Territories, and their Frontiers have had the double Distress of Maintaining their Enemies Army and their own, of which the *Dutch*, in 1672, were sad Examples, and the Palatinate, the *Swissian* and *Franco-man* Circles are so now.

The Case of the *Cevennois* is the only Instance, in which the Kingdom of *France* has felt any Convulsions; the Oppressions they felt, are those of Religion, rather than of Property, for the *French* are all so willing to fall in with their Prince, and so freely joyn with him in pursuit after Glory; that they are more willing to submit to Personal Slavery, than other Nations. These wretched People would have born the loss of all that we call Property, and have been Slaves as much as their Monarch had pleas'd; but when Tyranny over Conscience comes to a heighth, it often makes Men Mad; Religious Desperation makes Men Furies; wild Beasts are Baubles

to them, and 'tis not strange it should be so, for a Man once sensible of the State of his Soul, let that State be well or ill made, that Sence well or ill grounded, if it has once Master'd his Reason, and he is fix'd in the Opinion of it, he'll Destroy himself and all the World in Defence of it.

To this Possession of Mind, I must Attribute all the extravagant Performances of Pagans, Heathens, Jews and Jesuits, in the Matters of Erroneous Religion.

To this we owe the Negroes Singing and Dancing in the Fire, for Joy that they are going to their own Country; the voluntary Sacrifices of their own Blood, which we found the *Mexican* and *Peruvian* Indians made in the Temples of their Idol Gods. To this we owe the Exquisite Torments endur'd by the Jews in the Profession of the Abdicated Laws of *Moses*; frequent Instances of which are seen in the Executions of the Inquisition at *Lisbon*: And lastly, To this we owe the cheerful Sufferings of the Jesuits and Romish Missionaries in *China*, where they have been put to Death with all the Arts of Cruelty, back'd with a quick and studied Invention.

How much more should we expect the Minds of these Suffering Christians, are Agitated when they have joyn'd a real Inspiration to a Natural Prepossession, when they have an infallible Testimony within, that they are guided by the Truth, and assisted from above.

Mercure Scandale :

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ADVICE from the Scandalous CLUB.

A Poor Whore made a sad Complaint this Week at the Club, and demand'd Justice against a Certain Eminent Citizen, who had exacted her Performance, but cheated her of her Wages.

The Society resenting her Character, took her into Custody immediately, and began to talk of using her very Scurvily,

being particularly offended at the Brafs of her Countenance, and the Affront, as they took it, put upon their Society.

She told them plainly she was a Whore, and 'twas her Calling; if they had any thing to say to her on that Head, they were Welcome; she was willing to undergo the Correction of the House, provided they

they would but do her Justice afterwards; for after she had suffered the Law for the Fact, she ought not to suffer the Cheat too.

The Club was a little put to it what to Relolve, but at last they Demanded the particulars — She told them, That a Certain Citizen of London, living within a Mile of *Threadneedle-street*, having agreed with her for a dark Affair, at the Price of a Guinea, had sham'd her off with a Half-penny being in the Night, notwithstanding she had been so Honest to him, as not to pick his Pocket of 50 Guineas, which he own'd he had about him, contrary to the Duty of her Profession:

The Society told her, they would do her all the Justice they thought was due to her, which was to Summons the Man to appear at the next Meeting, and demanded Directions how to send to him; she told 'em he might be heard of at the *Sun Coffee-house* behind the *Exchange*, provided the Notice was left with the Man of the House.

So the farther hearing of the Matter was referr'd to the next sitting of the Club.

The Author of the *London-Post* being brought before the Society, was Charg'd with the Customary Offence of writing Nonsense, and his Paper of *March 6*, was read.

Speaking of giving Ships Blasphemous Names; as follows,

Why may not he, who can Christianize and Sanctify Bells by Infallibility, subvert the Names of Inanimate Creatures, and oblige the Neuter to flye its Participation altogether with the Masculine or Feminine Gender.

This being wholly unintelligible, the Clerk of the Assembly was call'd to unriddle it, who after some pause, told them he could not do it, but he'd talk a Language somewhat like it, he said it may be one piece of Nonsense might explain another, so he began;

Heliogabalus made the Great Turk: How d'ye do from Paris to the Great Sea of the Alps, where Leviathan being a Great Hill as big as a Whale, was Erected on the top of the tall Steeple of the Danube.

He was going on, when News was brought that the Author had submitted to Censure, and according to the last Notice, had Corrected several Mistakes of his former Papers, and offer'd a Security for a careful Revising them for the future.

The Society declaring their Design was the Rectification of the Abuse, not the Personal Censure; Order'd all further Examinations to stop, and all due Encouragement to be given to a Temper so Honest and Ingenious.

Advertisements are taken in by *J. Matthews*, in *Filkington-Court* in Little Britain.

ADVERTISEMENT S.

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AN Historical Didactical Treatise of the Two Covenants. Wherein are briefly laid down the Life of Christ, and that of Moses; and several obscure Passages of Holy Scripture open'd, many common Mistakes about this Matter corrected, and a good Life seriously pressed. By *John Parker*, now Rector of *Colne-Engayne*, in the County of *Essex*, and formerly Fellow of *Emanuel College* in Cambridge. Printed for *Jeffery Wale*, at the Angel in St. Paul's Church-Yard. 1704.

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